(b) whether the budget allocation for opening of these universities was Rs.3,280 crore;

(c) if so, what are total universities at present in the country;

(d) to what extent creation of 12 more universities would help in improving the education in the country;

(e) whether there are still many States where these universities are not set up; and

(f) if so, by when these universities would start functioning?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) and (b) With a view to increasing access and improving quality of higher education in the country, it is proposed to provide sixteen Central Universities - one in each State which does not have a Central University. This includes conversion of four existing State Universities into Central Universities and establishment of a new Central University in each of the remaining twelve uncovered States. The Central Universities Bill, 2008 has already been introduced in Lok Sabha for establishment and incorporation of these Universities. The financial requirement to meet the recurring and non-recurring expenditure of these Universities during the remaining part of the 11th Plan period is estimated at Rs.3,480 crore.

(c) to (f) There are 24 Central Universities at present, and together with the proposed Central Universities every State will have at least one Central University. Even though Central Universities constitute only a small segment of the higher education system in India, these institutions make a significant contribution in setting standards of quality education and research, besides helping in removing regional imbalances in access to higher education. The establishment and functioning of the new Central Universities is dependent on the passing of the "The Central Universities Bill, 2008" and hence no definite timeframe can be indicated at this stage.

Provincialisation of schools in Assam

*198. SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of Lower Primary, Middle English, high School and Higher Secondary schools have been set up in Assam with due permission of the Union Government, during the last many years and if so, the details thereof year-wise and district-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government has failed to provincialise the services of the teachers and the school buildings are also in a very deplorable conditions; and

(c) whether the Ministry would adopt any policy for solution of such problems and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) No primary, upper primary or secondary school has been set up in Assam under any related centrally sponsored scheme of Government of India since 2001 except 24 residential Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas for girls at upper primary level, in educationally backward blocks.

(b) and (c) The provincialisation of schools and teachers in Assam is in the realm of the Government of Assam and not the Union Government.

Reservation for disabled persons in private sector

†*199. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has failed in providing concessions and encouragement to the disabled persons in the country;

(b) whether Government proposes to make a legislation whereby the disabled persons could get reservation in private companies and could contribute in nation's development; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): (a) No Sir. A number of measures by way of concessions, facilities and encouragement are being implemented for persons with disabilities. Some of the important ones are:-

- 3% reservation in employment in the establishment of Governments, Public Sector Undertakings etc.
- 3% reservation in admission to Govt. and Govt.-aided educational institutions.
- Concession in income tax liability.
- Custom Duty and Excise Duty exemption on aids and appliances meant for persons with disabilities.
- Concessional fares in transport services provided by Government and public undertaking.
- National awards are given every year under various categories to high achievers from among persons with disabilities.
- Assistive devices are being provided free of cost or at concessional rate to needy disabled persons.
- Scholarships are being provided to students with disabilities to pursue higher education.

(b) Article 16 of the Constitution of India enables the State to provide for reservation in favour of under-represented classes only in matters of public employment.

(c) Section 41 of The Persons with Disability (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 envisages *inter alia* that the appropriate Govt. will provide incentives to employers in the private sector to employ persons with disabilities. Para 28(ii) of the National Policy for Persons with Disabilities, 2006 also provides for incentives, awards etc. to encourage the employment of persons with disabilities in private sector. In pursuance of these provisions, national awards are being given every year to best employers and placement officers/agencies for providing employment to persons with disability. In addition, a scheme of Incentives to Employers in the Private Sector for giving Employment to Persons with Disabilities has also been introduced from 1.4.2008.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.